

804 takes to reach the place. If, for instance, a Bushman is asked how far a
805 certain waterhole is, he points to the part of the sky which the sun
823 will have reached by the time one gets to that waterhole; or, if it is
far, he says: "One night on the way," or "two", etc.; or, again,
if asked the length of a journey, he will name the places at which he
slept or will sleep, touching a finger to his lips for each, then hold up
the fingers, saying: "So many nights" (not days).¹

802 In counting, they use only the numerals one and two quite
177 freely. Three they sometimes use, taking the Nama word for it,
although they are more apt to speak of "two and one" than "three".
For anything above three they generally make use of the word
"many", although by the Northern Bushmen Nama or Bantu
numerals may sometimes be substituted. These higher numerals,
however, are evidently picked up from their neighbours by ear, and
repeated without much consideration of their value, as, says Miss Bleek,
a child of three will count in imitation of its seniors, varying the
sequence of numerals each time. In some cases, among both the Cape
Bushman and several of the North-Western tribes, such formations
are also found as $4 = 2 + 2$, $5 = 2 + 2 + 1$, and so on up to ten.

802 [803] The numeral system of the Bushmen is thus essentially binary in
principle. Occasionally, however, modifications occur suggestive of
a quinary system. Thus in Naron the words for "four" mean "two
fingers and two fingers", but "five" is "hand" (sometimes, how-
ever $2 + 2 + 1$ fingers), "ten" is "both hands", "fifteen" "both
hands, one foot"; and the same system occurs in Auen. As these
words indicate, the Bushmen count larger numbers on their fingers.
In counting, they begin with the little finger of the left hand, touching
each finger in turn on the lips, then continue in the same manner from
the thumb of the right hand. As a rule, it may be added, nothing that
they want to count exceeds ten, indeed, hardly ever reaches that
numeral!²

¹ D. F. Bleek, *Naron*, 38; *idem*, "Bushmen of Central Angola," loc. cit.; Kaufmann, loc. cit.

² D. F. Bleek, loc. cit.; Kaufmann, loc. cit.; cf. Schmidl, "Zahl und Zählen in Afrika," *Mitt. anthrop. Ges. Wien*, xlv (1915), pp. 194-5, for a useful summary sketch of Bushman numeral systems.

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for the FX10 Bushmen file.
see category 116, FX13 Hottentot]